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Your Life Is Hidden with Christ, So Keep Looking Up Colossians 3:1-4

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. The word from God before us today through which the Holy Spirit brings us the Good News of Jesus is Colossians 3

Therefore, since you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is sitting at God's right hand. Keep your minds focused on the things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your Life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4).

This is the word of our Lord.

Dear friends in Christ, fellow saints washed clean in the blood of our risen Savior:

Late night on PBS as I was growing up, Jack Horkheimer from the Miami Space Transit Planetarium had a five-minute segment called *Star Hustler* and later *Star Gazer*. Each week he talked about some interesting phenomenon you could see with your own eyes by looking up into the sky. For example, last week he might have told us about the lunar eclipse that happened very early Tuesday morning. He always signed off with the phrase: "Keep looking up."

Yet even as we look up, there's so much we cannot see with the naked eye. Even the most powerful telescopes are so limited. And that's just with this physical world. How much more is hidden in the spiritual realms! In fact even your own life, dear Christian, your spiritual life, is hidden with Christ. And that gives us all the more reason to keep looking up, but not in the way Jack Horkheimer was talking about.

So dear friends, as the Holy Spirit enlightens us through these words that he gave the Apostle Paul to write, we focus on the theme: Your life is hidden in Christ, so keep looking up. Part one: His resurrection raises your mind to things above. Part two: His resurrection will raise you in glory at his return. Keep looking up.

A. His resurrection raises your mind to things above

The Apostle writes, "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (Colossians 3:1, 2 NIV84). Christ's resurrection raises your mind to things above.

"You have been raised with Christ" (Colossians 3:1 NIV84). Notice how that is meaningful only if Jesus himself has actually risen from the dead. Yet his resurrection is hidden from human reason. Rather than looking up on that first Easter morning, the women as well as Peter and John later on, looked down into the tomb. Human reason could not grasp what had happened even though Jesus had told them ahead of time. The

angel had to tell them again, “He is not here; he has risen, just as he said” (Matthew 28:6 NIV84).

In our day, many deny this history. According to them, no dead person rose and left a tomb outside Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago. Either Jesus didn’t actually die, they say, and just regained consciousness in the tomb or else it was all a made up story. They claim that the real resurrection is what happens inside people today, so that what happened two thousand years ago doesn't matter.

We do not deny the history. Jesus’ resurrection is a real, true, actual, historical fact. If we are raised with him but he didn’t actually rise from the dead, then we are still as dead as a decaying corpse. We do not deny the history. But do our daily lives deny the power of his resurrection within us?

Your life is hidden in Christ. He is your life. It all comes from him. A dead Christ is no Christ, no life. All the power of life is with him, and he brings it to you. You have been raised with him. How did this happen to you? When did it happen? In your baptism. Colossians 2 says, “... having been buried with [Christ] in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Colossian 2:12 NIV84).

You know the power of Baptism that united you with Christ and made you alive in him. But do we neglect or deny that power in the way we live out our time on earth? We know the power of Christ’s resurrection that washed away our sin, freeing us from its control. But do we deny that power by only half-heartedly fighting temptation? We know the power of Christ’s resurrection that reconciled us to God. But do we deny that power by failing to live as his children, walking in the light, living in peace?

Instead so much of our time, money, and energy pursues earthly things. They can look so colorful like brightly dyed Easter eggs. We spend our time and effort hunting and searching for what this earth can offer. But what happens to Easter eggs laying around for a few weeks? So also, all the things of this earth will eventually rot, spoil, and stink.

Confess your earthly mindedness. It infects me, just as it infects you. Earthly mindedness is more than just a weakness. It works death and damnation. Confess it.

Then look up and see your risen Savior. His resurrection raises your mind to things above. Your life is hidden with Christ. You died with him. So earthly things have lost their power over you. Even God's law can no longer condemn you who are hidden with Christ. How far above our human ways God’s justice is! Christ’s resurrection raises our minds to things above.

You were raised with Christ. Just as God had declared Christ not guilty by raising him from the dead, so also he declared you not guilty in that same act. For you've been raised with Christ. You’ve been acquitted in God’s courtroom, not because of what you do but because of what Jesus did. How far above our humans ways God’s justice is! Christ’s resurrection raises our minds to things above. Keep looking up. Your life is hidden with Christ.

Keep looking up not only to see the risen Christ but also the returning Christ. His resurrection will raise you in glory at his return. Until then your life is hidden in Christ, so keep looking up.

B. His resurrection will raise you in glory at his return

The Apostle writes, “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory” (Colossians 3:3 NIV84). Your life now is hidden with Christ. So don’t expect the world to acknowledge you as a son or daughter of the Most High. Your position is hidden from them. Don’t expect the world to honor you as a heir of God and coheir with Christ. Your status is hidden. Don’t expect the things of this earth to all fall into place to make you happy and successful in this world. For your life is hidden with Christ.

Although your life in Christ is hidden from the world, don’t doubt its reality. Through faith in Jesus you truly are sons and daughters of the Most High. You truly are heirs of God. And all that happens in this life, both the good and the bad, must serve for you according to God’s good and gracious will. Even our own eyes cannot see this, so keep looking up with the eyes of faith. Keep looking up and believe that Christ is right now ruling over all things with the power of God’s right hand as the text stated earlier. It’s hidden, but it’s real.

If we keep looking up believing that our life is hidden in Christ and that he is seated at God’s right hand, how that changes the way we live each day! We live not for ourselves but for his glory. He truly provides all we need for body and soul and protects us for time and eternity. For he is seated at God’s right hand. Keep looking up trusting his care and giving thanks for his goodness and mercy. The world will not count that as a glorious life, but God does. So keep looking up.

Boldly stand firm on Jesus and his truth even when pressured to do otherwise. Keep looking up trusting that he who is seated at God’s right hand can certainly protect you in the way that is best. Your life is hidden with him. Humbly serve others in love no matter how lowly the task. Keep looking up giving thanks to Jesus by serving as he served. Your life is hidden with him, and his glory ennobles all that you do in his name, even though the world cannot see it.

Keep looking up. Although your life with Christ is hidden now, it won’t stay hidden. When Jesus returns in his glory, not even the most hardened unbeliever will be able to deny what Christ has done for you. He will raise your body from the grave, even after it has turned to dust. He will raise your body and glorify it like unto his glorious body. You and I and all his people will live in the glory of heaven forever and ever. What an inheritance! “Dear friends, now we are the children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2 NIV84). So keep looking up.

Even as the troubles and hardships of this life try to lower our eyes to focus on the earthly, keep looking up. Christ’s resurrection raises your mind to things above. Keep looking up, for “our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18 NIV84). Christ’s resurrection will raise you up in glory at his return. Yes, your life is hidden with Christ, but how real that life is! Keep looking up.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.